

**HAB**



**RESOURCES**

# New TinyUrl

~~[www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com](http://www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com)~~



[www.SwimHealthyVA.com](http://www.SwimHealthyVA.com)

**VDH** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
To protect the health and promote the well-being of all people in Virginia

Virginia Department of Health > Environmental Epidemiology > Waterborne Hazards Control > Healthy and Safe Swimming



## HEALTHY AND SAFE SWIMMING



The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) urges beachgoers and those using and maintaining swimming pools, spas, and water parks to focus on simple steps that can be taken to help ensure a healthy and safe swimming experience for everyone.

Information available through the links below describes the role of swimmers, aquatics and beach staff, residential pool owners, and public health officials in preventing drowning, swimming-related injuries, and waterborne illnesses. Click to learn more about swimmer hygiene and how you can take an active role to protect yourself while swimming and prevent the spread of germs:

[Recreational Water Illnesses](#)

[Drowning and Swimming-Related Injuries](#)

[Pool and Spa Safety](#)

[Swimming in Natural Waters](#)

[Beach Monitoring](#)

[Harmful Algae Blooms](#)

Most algae do not harm people, wildlife, or the environment. But some types of algae in Virginia can be dangerous. Algae species in fresh and salt water may multiply rapidly when environmental conditions are favorable for their development. Most algal blooms are not harmful but some do affect fish and humans, as well as other animals like birds and marine mammals. These are known as Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). If water is discolored, murky, has an odor, or if there appears to be a film on the water surface, swimming is not advised for humans or pets. Learn more about HABs and how to report them by clicking on the Harmful Algae Blooms link above.

[Healthy Swimming Pledge](#)

For more information on waterborne pathogens, please see the links in the left-hand sidebar under Waterborne Hazards Control.

# HAB MAP

## HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (HABS)



**HAB Hotline: 1-888-238-6154**

**\*NEW\* – [Click Here to Report a HAB Online](#)**

Algae are naturally-occurring microscopic organisms that are found in fresh and salt waters of Virginia and around the world. Many are beneficial because they are major producers of oxygen and food for many of the animals that live in these waters.

Most algae do not harm people, wildlife, or the environment. But some types of algae in Virginia can be dangerous. Algae species in fresh and salt water may multiply rapidly when environmental conditions are favorable for their development. The great number of algal cells in the water results in what is called an algal bloom.

A bloom often (but not always) results in a color change in the water. Algal blooms can be any color, but the most common ones are red or brown and are known as either "red" or "brown" tides. Most algal blooms are not harmful but some do affect fish and humans, as well as other animals like birds and marine mammals. These are known as Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs). If water is discolored, murky, has an odor, or if there appears to be a film on the water surface, swimming is not advised for humans or pets. Please contact the HAB Hotline to report your observations and so that surveillance of the area can be conducted.



Contact Us

Beach Monitoring



Vectorborne Disease Control



Waterborne Hazards Control



Zoonoses



Rabies Control



Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)



[Algal Bloom Surveillance Map](#)



[HAB Resources](#)

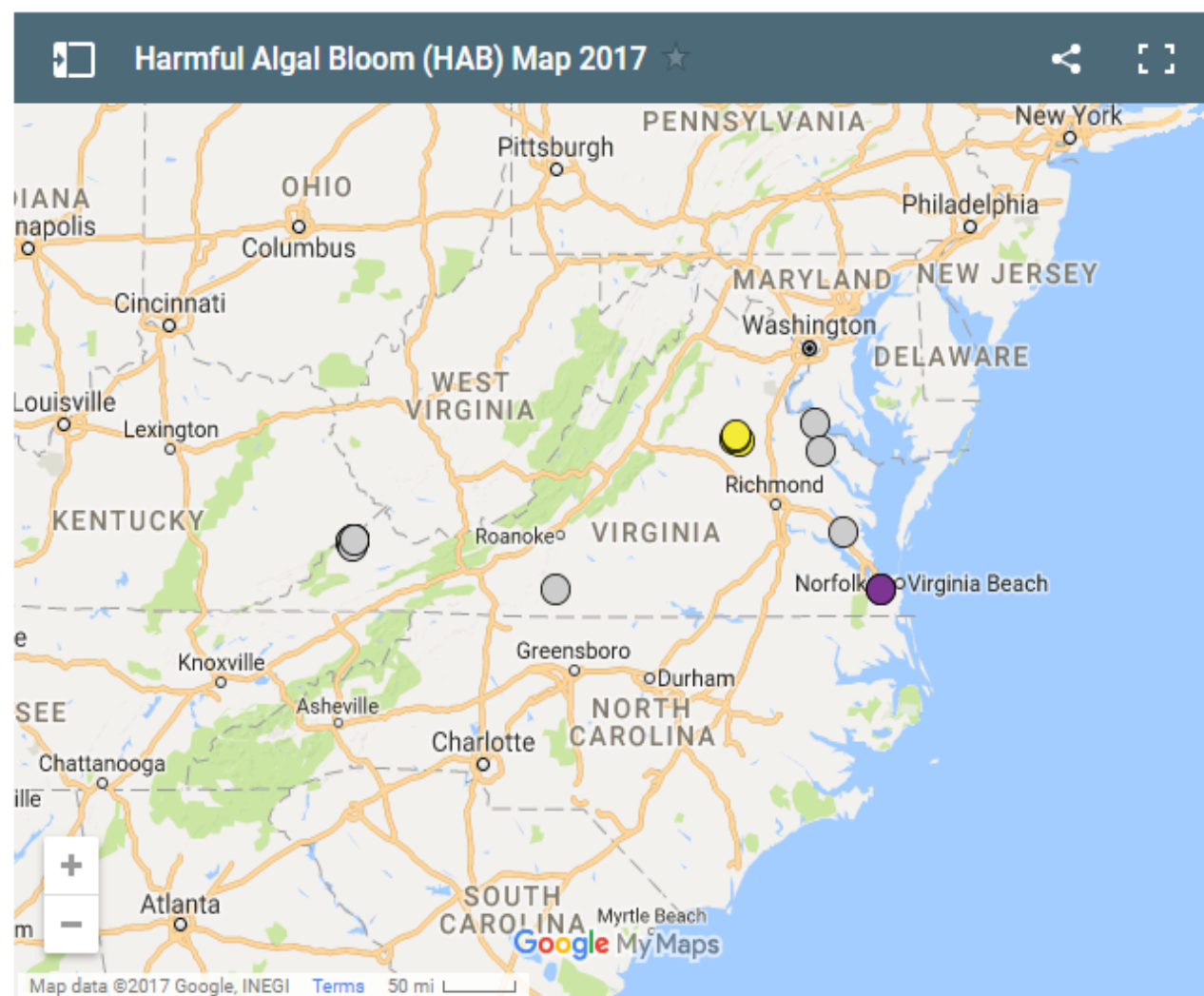
[Cyanobacteria](#)

[HAB Task Force](#)

[What are Harmful Algal](#)

# ALGAL BLOOM SURVEILLANCE MAP

The map is updated regularly during the months of March – November. Please click on map p



[Contact Us](#)

## Beach Monitoring

## Vectorborne Disease Control

## Waterborne Hazards Control

## Zoonoses

## Rabies Control

## Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

## Algal Bloom Surveillance Map

## HAB Resources

## Cyanobacteria

HAB Task Force

## What are Harmful Algal

# 2017 - HAB Resources Toolkit

- Contains the important HAB webpages and resources categorized by specialties
- Easy to access

The screenshot shows the Virginia Department of Health's HAB Resources webpage. The browser address bar displays [www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/). The page has a navigation sidebar on the left with the following links: Contact Us, Beach Monitoring, Vectorborne Disease Control, Waterborne Hazards Control, Zoonoses, Rabies Control, Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs), **HAB Resources** (circled in red), Cyanobacteria, HAB Task Force, What are Harmful Algal Blooms?, Public Health Toxicology, Related Links, and Publications A-Z. The main content area is titled 'HAB RESOURCES' and includes a link to 'HAB Resources pdf'. Below this, there is a table with two columns. The first column lists various resources, and the second column provides links to these resources. The resources listed are: 'HAB Webpage, Surveillance Map & General Information' (link: [www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/)), 'Harmful Algal Bloom - Main Page' (link: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-main-page/>), 'Harmful Algal Bloom Surveillance Map' (link: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-surveillance-map/>), 'HAB Online Report Form' (link: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-online-report-form/>), and 'Temporary Feature Page - Amonilatum' (link: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-temporary-feature-page-amonilatum/>).

HAB Webpage, Surveillance Map & General Information	
<b>Harmful Algal Bloom - Main Page</b> It is the official VDH-DEE-HAB website. It contains information and resources related to the Harmful Algal Bloom Program.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-main-page/">www.SwimHealthyVA.com</a>
<b>Harmful Algal Bloom Surveillance Map</b> It reflects the status of algae blooms during HAB season (March-November), as well as the results of algae bloom samples. The map is updated weekly or as needed year around.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-surveillance-map/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-surveillance-map/</a>
<b>HAB Online Report Form</b> The form provides an option for online HAB report submittal. It can be utilized by the publics and environmental health professionals. It provides an easy way for the primary task force members to communicate HAB reports received by them with one another and to request assistance.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-online-report-form/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-online-report-form/</a>
<b>Temporary Feature Page - Amonilatum</b> Example of a bloom webpage for featuring a bloom of significance and a link to the FAQs. These pages facilitate public outreach during bloom events.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-temporary-feature-page-amonilatum/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-resources/hab-temporary-feature-page-amonilatum/</a>



# 2017 - HAB Resources Toolkit

## Harmful Algal Bloom Guidance & Resources

### HAB Webpage, Surveillance Map & General Information

<b>Harmful Algal Bloom - Main Page</b> It is the official VDH-DEE-HAB website. It contains information and resources related to the Harmful Algal Bloom Program.	<a href="http://www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com">www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com</a>
<b>Harmful Algal Bloom Surveillance-Map</b> It reflects the status of algae blooms during HAB season (March-November), as well as the results of algae bloom samples. The map is updated weekly or as needed year around.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-blooms-habs/algal-bloom-surveillance-map/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-blooms-habs/algal-bloom-surveillance-map/</a>
<b>HAB Online Report Form</b> The form provides an option for online HAB report submittal. It can be utilized by the publics and environmental health professionals. It provides an easy way for the primary task force members to communicate HAB reports received by them with one another and to request assistance.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-bloom-online-report-form/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-bloom-online-report-form/</a>
<b>Temporary Feature Page – A. monilatum</b> Example of a bloom webpage for featuring a bloom of significance and a link to the FAQs. These pages facilitate public outreach during bloom events.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/alexandrium-monilatum-hab-in-lower-york-lower-james-rivers-and-chesapeake-bay/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/alexandrium-monilatum-hab-in-lower-york-lower-james-rivers-and-chesapeake-bay/</a>  <a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/frequently-asked-questions-fags-alexandrium-monilatum/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/frequently-asked-questions-fags-alexandrium-monilatum/</a>
<b>HAB Taskforce Response Plan (2017)</b> The response plan is intended as a brief, public-facing document which articulates the function, roles, and responsibilities of the primary taskforce agencies and expectations on services provided by each during HAB events.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Virginia_HAB_ResponsePlan_Final_2017.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Virginia_HAB_ResponsePlan_Final_2017.pdf</a>
<b>HAB Universal Talking Points</b>	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Talking-points-for-discussing-harmful-algal-blooms.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Talking-points-for-discussing-harmful-algal-blooms.pdf</a>
<b>VDH Brochures:</b> <i>Harmful Algal Blooms and other Organisms of Concern in Coastal Waters</i>  <i>Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae)</i>	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/04/HABs_Brochure.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/04/HABs_Brochure.pdf</a>  <a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/02/Cyanobacteria_Bro.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/02/Cyanobacteria_Bro.pdf</a>
<b>Poison Hotline &amp; Map of Centers</b> Poison Control Centers may be engaged to utilize HAB talking points and specific waterbody-bloom information to the public during bloom events.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Virginia-Poison-Control-Centers.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Virginia-Poison-Control-Centers.pdf</a>
<b>Epidemiology Resources &amp; Information</b>	
<b>HAB Process Flow</b> The flow chart is intended to serve as a job aide for VDH staff for the coordinating, reporting, and investigating of HAB events.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/HABCommunicationProcessFlow_FINAL.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/HABCommunicationProcessFlow_FINAL.pdf</a>

<b>*VDH HAB Human Screening Form</b> Is intended to facilitate the investigation of a reported waterborne exposure, such that the local health district can more easily determine whether or not the more comprehensive OHHABS human report form is necessary.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Harmful-Algal-Bloom-Health-Survey_Final.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Harmful-Algal-Bloom-Health-Survey_Final.pdf</a>
<b>CDC-One Health Harmful Algal Bloom System (OHHABS) Online Guidance and Training Resources</b> The newly launched OHHABS system provides a database for collecting and storing environmental, animal, and human HAB exposure information.	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/habs/ohhabs.html">http://www.cdc.gov/habs/ohhabs.html</a>
<b>*OHHABS- Human Form and Guidance</b> May be utilized by Epi Staff when one or more exposures are reported  Event and Case Definitions Tables offer definition of HAB event and human HAB associated case.	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-human-form.pdf">http://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-human-form.pdf</a> and <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-human-form-guidance.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-human-form-guidance.pdf</a>  <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-case-and-event-definitions-table-3-14-17.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/habs/pdf/ohhabs-case-and-event-definitions-table-3-14-17.pdf</a>
<b>CDC – HAB Associated Illness and Syndromes</b>	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/habs/illness.html">http://www.cdc.gov/habs/illness.html</a>
<b>VDH – Marine Toxins and Associated Syndromes</b>	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Marine-Toxins-and-Associated-Syndromes.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Marine-Toxins-and-Associated-Syndromes.pdf</a>
<b>VDH – Cyanobacteria Toxins and Health Effects</b>	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Cyanobacteria-Genera_Toxins-Health-Effect.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Cyanobacteria-Genera_Toxins-Health-Effect.pdf</a>
<b>*Fax completed forms to DEE (804-864-8131)</b>	
<b>Resources for Environmental Health Specialists</b>	
<b>VDH – Provisional Recreational Water Guidance for Microcystin and Microcystis Blooms</b> This document supports decision-making by public health & environmental officials in response to the occurrence of a Microcystis algal bloom in Virginia's waters.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/02/VDH_MicrocystisGuidance.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2016/02/VDH_MicrocystisGuidance.pdf</a>
<b>HAB Public Notification</b> <i>Press Releases</i> Template press releases for issuing or lifting recreational advisories.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/public-notification-templates/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/public-notification-templates/</a>
<i>HAB Signs</i> Signs for raising HAB-awareness and posting HAB-affected waterways.	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-recreational-awareness-advisory-signs/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/hab-recreational-awareness-advisory-signs/</a>
<i>EPA – Template Social Media Posts</i> Issuing an advisory	<a href="https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/social-media-issue-advisory.docx">https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/social-media-issue-advisory.docx</a>
Lifting an advisory	<a href="https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/social-media-lift-advisory.docx">https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-07/social-media-lift-advisory.docx</a>
<b>Standard Operating Procedure For Sample</b>	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Harmful-Algal-Bloom-Health-Survey_Final.pdf">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/07/Harmful-Algal-Bloom-Health-Survey_Final.pdf</a>

# Messaging for HABs

- Signage
- Press Releases
- FAQs
- Fact Sheets
- Brochures
  - “Working Waterfront”
- Talking Points
- HAB Digest

**BE AWARE OF ALGAE BLOOMS**

During an algae bloom, water may have surface scum, mats, or films with red, green, white streaks or glops.

**REPORT BLOOMS TO THE**  
Harmful Algal Bloom Hotline 888-238-6154




It is safe to eat properly cooked fish caught from waters with an algae bloom. Thoroughly clean the fish. Discard the carcass and guts. Wash hands, surfaces, and utensils with soapy water.

The Virginia Harmful Algal Bloom Task Force works to protect public health during algae blooms.  
Learn more at [www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com](http://www.HarmfulAlgaeVA.com)

Contact Your Local Health Department at: **VDH** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Protecting You and Your Environment

## Cyanobacteria (Blue-Green Algae)

Example Harmful Algal Bloom Press Release

 109 Governor Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 • <a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov">www.vdh.virginia.gov</a>	<i>News Release</i>
<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b> 20XX	Month, XX,
For More Information Contact	Release #XX
Contact name and number (and title if not a PIO--PIO contact preferred)	

**ATTENTION**

**POTENTIALLY HARMFUL ALGAE HAVE BEEN DETECTED**  
Water quality is being monitored to determine if health risks may be present.

- Avoid swimming and wading in areas where surface scum is present
- Keep away children, pets, and animals, who are more likely to swallow water
- Thoroughly wash skin with clean fresh water after contact

**SOME ALGAE MAY CAUSE ILLNESS**  
Call your doctor or veterinarian if you or your animals experience illness or signs of poisoning.


While fish consumption is not affected by toxic algae, thoroughly cleaning the fish, discarding the carcass & guts, & washing hands & surfaces afterward with soapy water is advised.

Report algal blooms and illnesses to VDH Hotline: 888-238-6154      Call your Local Health Department

For more information:  
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-blooms-habs/>

**VDH** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Protecting You and Your Environment

**ALGAL BLOOMS :  
INFORMATION FOR VIRGINIA'S WORKING WATERFRONT**



Aerial photo of algae bloom on York River  
Photo credit: VIMS

**What is an algal bloom?**

Algae are naturally-occurring microscopic organisms that are found in fresh and salt waters of Virginia and around the world. Algae may multiply rapidly when environmental conditions are favorable, such as after a rain has washed nutrients from the land into the river. A great number of algal cells in the water results in what is called an algal bloom.

**VDH** VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Protecting You and Your Environment

# HAB Sampling

- **Sampling Protocol Developed**

## Harmful Algae Bloom Sample Collection Protocol for Virginia Waters

*The sampler should contact the lab to make arrangements for analysis to ensure proper turn around time and scheduling.*

### SITE INSPECTION:

- ☐ Record observations for each sample taken (location in body of water, color of bloom, presence of odor, scum, dead fish, proximity to culverts, docks, recreational beaches, ect. Photos of conditions at the site are useful.
- ☐ Record environmental parameters including water temperature, salinity, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and turbidity (secchi depth).
- ☐ Record site name, latitude and longitude of sample location, and position of sample taken (ie: scum layer, sub surface layer ( -.5 m), bottom (+.5 m), ect...).

- **HAB Kits distributed to 8 health districts**





# Training Section In HAB Toolkit

## HAB Training

HAB Training Main Page

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-epidemiology/harmful-algal-bloom-training/>

HAB 101 (7/25/17) – Training Video

<https://www.train.org/virginia/course/1072636/> 

[ARCHIVED in TRAIN – Course ID  
1072636]

Note – for each viewing, you'll need to  
complete a course evaluation.

[Need a TRAIN Account?](#) 

Presentation PDFs

[http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/08/HAB-101-training\\_2017\\_onepdf.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/08/HAB-101-training_2017_onepdf.pdf) 

Training Agenda

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/12/2017/08/HAB-Training-Agenda-Final.pdf> 

**“Harmful Algal Blooms (HAB) 101 – Bloom Basics and Public Health Response”** featured information about algae blooms, the VA HAB Task Force, and provided targeted training sessions for VDH epidemiology, environmental health, and public information staff.

# New Online HAB Report Form

## HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS (HABS)



**HAB Hotline: 1-888-238-6154**

**\*NEW\* – Click Here to Report a HAB Online**

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Contact Us

Beach Monitoring



Vectorborne Disease Control



Waterborne Hazards Control



Zoonoses



Rabies Control



Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)



Algal Bloom Surveillance Map

HAB Resources


Cyanobacteria

HAB Task Force

What are Harmful Algal

# New Online HAB Report Form

- Blooms & Fish kills
- Provides notification to primary responders – allows responders request assistance
- Provides submitter with a confirmation email with links to HAB info and contacts

HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM ONLINE REPORT FORM	
<b>Select a Report Type *</b>	Report #: 18
<input type="text" value="New Report"/>	<b>Select a Report Type</b>
	<input type="text" value="New Report"/>
<b>Waterbody Name *</b>	<b>Waterbody Name</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Chris Greene Lake"/>
<b>Date of Observation *</b>	<b>Date of Observation</b>
<input type="text"/> 	<input type="text" value="07/21/2017"/>
<b>Time of Observation *</b>	<b>Waterbody Location</b>
<input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> <input type="text" value="AM"/>	<b>City*/County</b>
HH MM	<input type="text" value="Albemarle"/>
<b>Waterbody Location</b>	<b>Nearest Landmark</b>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="4748 Chris Greene Lake Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22911 - Swimming Beach and boat ramp"/>
<b>City*/County</b>	<b>Is your report concerning a public or private body of water?</b>
<input type="text" value="Not Sure"/>	<input type="text" value="Public"/>
	<b>Contact Information for person reporting the bloom</b>
	<b>Name</b>
	<input hughes"="" ken\"="" type="text" value="Timothy \"/>
	<b>Organization</b>
	<input type="text" value="Albemarle County Parks and Recreation"/>
	<b>Email</b>
	<input type="text" value="thughes@albemarle.org"/>
	<b>Phone</b>
	<input type="text" value="(434) 962-1532"/>
	<b>What was observed?</b>
	<input type="text" value="Algae Bloom"/>
	<b>Comments about your observations</b>
	<input type="text" value="Submitted by M. Smigo, for Ken Hughes, who notified VDH DEE of bloom at 10:30am on 7/27/17. Solitude Lake Mngmt sampled 7/21/17, with identification/counts of Aphanizomenon spp at 47,700. Request for HAB investigation Valley DEQ for Chris Greene Lake. Microcystin test strip recommended for use at sites human exposure is likely along swimming beach/lake or the bloom/scum is dense. DEQ advised to coordinate with ODU for equipment needed, sampling, shipping samples overnight. The SOP and ppt by ODU for sampling/shipping was shared with Valley -Tara Sieber 540-574-7870 and Jennifer Welcher 540 574-7854 who will coordinate on bloom investigation activities Notifying Health district staff for situational awareness -John McClelland 434-972-6210. Sending pictures in subsequent email."/>

# Questions?

[www.SwimHealthyVA.com](http://www.SwimHealthyVA.com)  
1-888-238-6514

For comments and recommendations contact:

**Margaret Smigo**  
**Waterborne Hazards Control**  
**Program Coordinator**  
**VDH-OEPI-DEE**  
**Margaret.Smigo@vdh.virginia.gov**  
**(804)864-8128**



# HAB Kit Location Map

